THE COUNTY PAPER.

By DOBYNS & CO.

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THE STARS AND THE BELL.

It was dark and cold at the midnight hour,
For Christmas Day was about to begin;
The old church-bell hung high in the tower,
And the stars came peeping in.

The old church-bell hung high in the tower,
And the shining stars, above in the sky,
Laughed to themselves as he clanged the hour,
And winked with each golden eye.

"Pray, what do you know about time!" they cried.
"We were old when your earth was young,
And you could not number us if you tried!"
But the old bell held his tongue.

Then the sexton toiled up the tower stair,
And his head was bowed and gray,
But he cheerily called, "Old Bell, up there,
Ring out! it is Christmas Day!"

He seized the rope in each wrinkled hand,
And pulled with a youthful might;
And the glad sound pealed o'er the sleeping land,
And soared to the stars so bright.

"Ho, ho!" laughed the scornful stars again,
"What know you of Christmastide!
We shone on that far off Eastern plain
Where a star was the Wise Men's guide.

"We saw the child in his manger-bed,
And the gifts that the Magi gave;
And we shall shine when your voice is fled—
We shall shine on the sexton's grave!"

"Glory to God!" pealed the bell, "for aye!
Peace, peace to all human strife!
The Saviour comes with a gift to-day—
And the gift is eternal life.

"O shining stars! unto you 'twas given
To herald the Saviour's birth;
And the praise and the glory belong to heaven,
But the joy belongs to earth.

A HOLIDAY LESSON.

New York Witness.

It was late of a chilly December afternoon. The leaden clouds hung low with their promise of a speedy snow-storm. Even now an occasional frozen drop struck against the frozen window pane, and each gust, as it swept through the streets of busy L——, had the breath of the storm in it, and drove all pleasure-seekers rapidly toward home.

It even seemed to penetrate into the houses, for Lois Canfield was putting the finishing touches to the supper preparations on the long dining-table, with a frown as lowering as any storm-cloud.

"It's of no use talking, mother," she was saying to a quiet pleasant-looking lady, busy mending by the coal-stove. "What is there to look forward to? Last year I made more than a hundred dollars worth of presents, and now I've got just five dollars and seventy-five cents. Enough, though, I suppose, as long as we're only boarding-house keepers."

"I'm sure I'm very thankful for the boarders to keep," said Mrs. Canfield.

"O, I'm not complaining as long as it helps papa, but I'm not any more thankful to Lucy Waters for saying it," was the quick reply.

"Let me see," said her mother, "did not you give Lucy one of your presents last year?"

"I guess I did, one of my best—it cost twelve dollars. I shouldn't have been such a silly, but I heard her say that Jennie Fen always gave her the nicest things of any girl, and I was determined to outdo her for once."

"You gave Jennie something, too, didn't you?"

"O, yes: I gave her that beautiful scene of Lake Como."

"And Mabel Joyce, what did you give her—something, I believe?"

"Yes, that ink-stand modelled after a group from the antique; and I paid nine dollars for that Etruscan vase I gave Aunt Kate, and that was broken before New Years. What a waste!"

"And were the others more necessary?" asked Mrs. Canfield.

"No; I heard Lucy say that only made the twenty-first and second vases that she owned, and I overheard Jennie say her room was so full of pictures already she did not know what to do unless she put some in the attic. It was scant thanks I gained in any case," and Lois looked up from the stool she had taken into her mother's face, with the glimmer of a smile breaking through the clouds.

Mrs. Canfield smiled also. Well, now, dear, as you have tried your plan of giving expensive luxuries and found no great satisfaction in it, suppose you try a new one, and use your small store this time in giving only useful things to those needing them, and see which gives the greater satisfaction."

"But mamma, it always seems as though at Christmas time one was a little justified in spending money extravagantly," argued Lois.

"And uselessly?" queried Mrs. Canfield.

"But are pretty things useless, then?" asked the girl.

"By no means, dear, though it is a question whether one element of true beauty must not also be utility; but we will not stop to go into metaphysics to-night, for, after all, every question in a life centers in one point: What is my duty in this matter?

Perhaps God saw we were not faithful stewards, and so took away our abundance. We know now what it is to be really in need of things. I believe I heard some complaints from you about cold feet before Aunt Maggie's ten-dollar gift enabled you to purchase new shoes, did not I?"

"I am afraid you did," answered Lois, slowly. Then she sat in quiet thought until the closing of the outer door told her that supper preparations must be hastened, when she sprang up, and, dropping a kiss softly on her mother's forehead that told her how the words were working, went about her duties.

In the days that came close upon this one there were many hours of quiet thinking on the girl's part. She was trying to define the useful things and just where they should go; for until these last few months Lois's acquaintance with real needs had not been very great.

"Lois," said her mother, one day, "did you give Cousin Agnes any presents last year?"

"No, mother. I am ashamed to say I didn't; but I know you and papa did."

"Yes," said Mrs. Canfield, with a little sigh, "she will have to keep that in mind, for we have decided, papa and I, that so long as we have a debt unpaid it would not be just in us to make any presents this year, not even to you, Lois."

"Yes, mamma, you needn't mind me," answered Lois, bravely, "I've had enough."

A day or two after Lois called in at Cousin Agnes's, a small house where means were very limited and children were not at least below six.

"Drismas comes next week, tuzen," shouted little Max, catching hold of her dress.

"I guess it won't matter much to them, poor things," said his mamma, in an aside, "every cent does count so this year. An orange apiece will have to content them."

"I want a hobby-horse," said the youngster.

"Nonsense; you need shoes more. You'll soon be on the ground. The way they do walk out of their shoes is dreadful to contemplate."

"I want copper-toes, any way," put Mary.

"You ought to have iron ones. Lois, if you will wait a minute I will walk as far as Field's with you. I must have a little Canton flannel for baby, and it is cheapest there. If you are not ashamed of my gloves," she added, drawing on an exceedingly frayed pair, "I am; but my kids are my light ones of last summer, and these are all my second best. I will hide them under my shawl. Nothing like necessity, dear, for a teacher."

Lois listened, and on her mental tablets two items of shoes and gloves promptly found a place.

"Will it trouble you too much, Lois, to just call at my washwoman's, and tell her she need not come next week. The children will be at home, and with their help I must do it myself. It's just up Mintee lane."

Lois agreed, and walked on. At the number she inquired for Mrs. Tarish and was directed to a rear basement. There she found a poorly furnished room, two or three small children, and a discouraged-looking woman dressing one still younger.

"Mrs. White will not need you next week," said Lois, after speaking to all around.

"Won't! Why not? asked the woman quickly.

"She thinks she must get along by herself," said Lois.

The woman was silent, but Lois was sure there were tears under the down-cast lids.

"Did you need it very much?" she ventured to ask.

"I had kind of set it by," said the woman, "to get my baby a few bits of clothes. All she has in the world is these on the chair. She's never had none 'cept some old rags of mine; I tore the best off for her; but it can't be helped, I suppose."

"Perhaps it will be; take heart, Mrs. Tarish; I'll certainly remember baby a little at Christmas;" and she hurried away to consult others wiser than herself in that line of wardrobe.

Those were busy days that followed and very happy ones to Lois. She went out shopping on a new line, and was perfectly surprised to find how many more bundles five dollars would purchase when it was invested in calicoes and flannels and ten-cent toys than when she went, as a year before, to the shops of art and the antiques.

And then on Christmas day, what a succession of pleasures, from the thanks of Cousin Agnes for her pretty fur trimmed street gloves, and of Mrs. Tarish for the plain, warm clothes for the baby, to those of her own papa for an outside door mat, the lack of which had been quite a trial to him, and her mamma's for warm articles for her, hers being quite too far gone for use.

"It has really been the happiest day of my life," said Lois that evening.

"And yet, you have only had 'thanks' for your presents," answered mamma.

"Indeed, I had forgotten that," said Lois, laughing. I feel as rich as can be. I guess then, after all, real things of need and real thanks are what go together and give satisfaction. Any way, I am so satisfied that every year I live I'll try to practice on my new lesson.

A Japanese Circus.

Japanese Mail.

That something extraordinary was about to happen had been notified we believe in the Japanese papers; and by nine o'clock in the morning the creek road from the Grand Hotel to the third bridge, and in Hommura every point that could command a view of the "hundred and one steps," were closely crowded with spectators, Japanese and foreign. With the latter class the tea-house at the bottom of the steps was thronged, and the orders for beverages issued to the smiling waitresses were unprecedented in the history of that thriving establishment. "But," says the reader, "what has that flight of steps to do with the pony you were speaking of?" A great deal, sir, for the beast has been announced to go up and down them with a rider on his back. And, sure enough, when it arrived at the foot of the stairs, not without difficulty, and long behind time owing to the pressure of the crowd, a female athlete, armed with a potent cudgel, after scattering salt for luck, vaulted on its back and directed it, head on, to the steep ascent. With a resigned air, the patient creature commenced to jerk itself up the steps, every now and then sniffing and looking mildly surprised, as much as to say that the getting up the Atagoyama stairs to which it was so well accustomed, had been intensely stiffened and steepened. At the half-way stage, the poor brute apparently "half-baked," with heaving sides and drooping head, was allowed a few seconds' breathing time, and treated to a sprinkling of salt and then urged by the girl jockey to the latter and steeper half of its climb. And it went at it with a will, lurching upward and hogging its back with every slow but determined step. Within twenty feet of the summit, however, the horseflesh beginning to fail, though the spirit remained willing, the stalwart rider applied her stick, and used her voice with resonant effect. At the sixth or seventh step from the top, the pony's friends seized its bridle, its legs, anything they could lay hold of, and so it was dragged and shoved and pommeled to the achievement of his journey. At least we thought the journey was then achieved, never dreaming that the creature could return to the bottom of the steps direct, otherwise than by rolling down, as one winter morning years ago, a certain sailor did, to be picked up a mangled mass and carried to the grave. Yet when a few moments' rest had been accorded to the skeleton steed, a male acrobat, after throwing some salt at it, on the ground, and on himself, clambered on to the pad and pointed the jade's Roman nose Yokohama-ward. With its former matter-of-fact manner his mount began its descent. A short way down, the rider transferred the fan he carried to the safeguard of his toes, and calmly stood on his hands in the saddle, and fanned his face with his foot. At the middle stage, again, a few seconds' rest was allowed for the horse to breathe, and for the rider to make fresh oblations of salt. Thence to recommence and the pair to arrive safely at the foot of the hill amid continuous plaudits, after a series of varied and ingenious contortions performed by the biped associate of the dual company. We are informed that the anomalous quadruped will climb and descend a ladder.

A Chapter on Gloves.

"Live and learn" is a precept as well as a proverb. Very good advice it gives, and I shall act upon it to-day. The fact, I mean to write a new chapter on gloves, having lately extended my information on the subject.

To begin at the beginning, it will probably surprise many of my readers to learn that what are commonly known as "kid" gloves, very often are not made from skins of young goats.

On the contrary; the material is largely composed of lamb's-skin. A very small lot of the finest gloves are made from the real kid-skins, obtained from countries where the milk and flesh of goats contribute a leading portion of the general food.

The skins of lambs, which receive a much lighter dressing than when they are to be converted into pedal coverings, do duty to a large extent among the glove-makers, instead of kid.

It may as well be mentioned here, before entering more fully into the general subject of gloves, that in several towns in England, it has long been the custom, when the annual or semi-annual fair was held, to indicate its commencement by hoisting a huge glove in a prominent place.

It is within my own personal observation and memory that, until the measure of municipal reform, in the year 1835, it was the custom, while a three days' fair was going on in Liverpool, to hang out in front of the the Town Hall, a stuffed glove, some eighteen or twenty inches long.

While that was visible to the public, no arrest for debt could legally be made. Hence, creditor and debtor could meet during the fair, upon neutral ground, and amicably arrange their affairs.

In the city of Exeter, where the Lammas Fair was annually held by charter, it is commenced by carrying a gigantic glove, stuffed with meal or wool, through the streets on a very long pole, at the head of a procession. The tradesmen, artisans, gentry and nobility, attended by music, constituted this gay cavalcade. When the mammoth glove was brought back by this array, it was placed on the top of the Guildhall, from which it started, and then the fair begins, ending when the glove was taken down.

A very ancient practice, by no means disused as yet in England is, when there is an assize, without any prisoner to be tried (thence called "a maiden assize"), for the high sheriff to present the judge with a pair of white kid gloves, richly embroidered with gold thread.

On the same occasion the clerk of assize and the judge's clerk have money given to them—called glove silver. Not in England only, but in Ireland, Wales and Scotland is a maiden assize thus honored.

The use of gloves is known to have come down to the present time from a remote antiquity, which, nevertheless, must have included a certain degree of civilization.

The covering of the hand, whether hat, helmet or crown, derives its import of the human body, and the same may be said of the glove.

The hand—particularly that one which wielded sword, or spear, or battle-axes—was an honored [and honorable member of the human body-corporate.

The word "manus" (Latin for hand) indicated power, and therefore Dagobert, who preceded Charlemagne on the French throne, had his sceptre tipped with an extended hand, as a symbol of sovereignty.

The ancient Roman held that the property in any object passed upon the literal transfer of it, or part of it, into the hand of the purchaser. In the East, in early days, the symbol of transfer usually was the glove.

Thus, among Oriental people, the glove became an emblem or insign of dignity, and a luxury as well, though in neither character did it commend itself to the Greeks and Romans.

Among the former, indeed, the glove long remained a distinctive mark of the barbarians, sculptures at Thebes, visible at the present day, representing Asiatic ambassadors offering gloves, probably as signs of submission

The use of gloves was regarded in ancient times, as effeminate—much the same as umbrellas, when first introduced into England, some two hundred years ago, were ridiculed as womanish.

Xenophon, the Greek historian, mentions gloves as not used in his time (four centuries B. C.) by Greek or Roman.

Pliny the younger describes his uncle, who died A. D. 79, as traveling with a secretary by by his side wearing gloves to protect his diligent fingers from the numbing cold.

About the eleventh century, toward the close of the so-called middle ages, the glove attained a character of dignity throughout Europe.

When enfeoffing was performed by the symbol of a glove, the left-hand "handschuh," as the Germans call it, was used.

The glove scarcely represented a personal gage until the close of the fifteenth century, but nearly three hundred years earlier it came to be regarded, in France, as a sign of defiance.

Perhaps it indicated the symbolical staking of the prowess of the hand to which the glove belonged. To hang up a glove in a church was a public challenge.

In the middle ages the glove was the recognized privilege of dignified churchmen. It was embroidered and adorned at the back with precious stones.

The Bank Cashier.

The Fat Contributor.

Once upon a time a man became very much discouraged because his salary was not as big as a tobacco factory, so he borrowed $3,000,000 of a bank, and forgot all about paying it back. He had neglected to mention to the bank people anything about the matter at the time he had negotiated with himself for the making of the loan. There came a day when it was necessary, in the transaction of business, for the bank to make use of some of its alleged money and it was then discovered that some of the funds had disappeared. Of course the bank folks were more or less perplexed over this state of affairs, and the cashier, who, by the way, had taken the missing wealth, was questioned concerning its whereabouts. He frankly acknowledged that he had erred in making the appropriation, and was perfectly willing to pay it back; so he examined his pockets, and he could only turn out $1 13. The cashier was real sorry about not being able to settle; he said he had lost the money, but that he had no intention of doing so at all, and that as soon as he found it he would bring it right back to the bank. He said he would not like to have the matter go any further; his Sunday-school class might hear of it and think strangely of him, and altogether it would be best, he felt, if the whole matter were hushed right up.

It Wouldn't Work.

"What makes you walk so straight, Johnny?" asked a fond mother, the other day, as she saw her son making tracks for the door.

Johnny was silent.

"Have you a stiff neck, sir?" asked his mother, eyeing him sharply.

And Johnny, seeing he was cornered replied:

"I cannot tell a lie; it is a pumpkin pie that I stole from the shelf hard by, and I intended to try and screen it under my jacket and escape your eye, and to eat it with the boys who lie in wait on the roadway nigh, with many an anxious sigh for the pie."

At this juncture the pie dropped on the floor, and spread like a scandal.

Now, gentle reader, do you fancy his mother caught him in her arms and cried, and said she would rather have him steal a thousand insignificant pies and ruin seventy-five dollars worth of Axminster carpet than tell a falsehood?

She did not; she reached for a broom and fetched him one in the small of the back that doubled him twice and almost tied him in a bow knot, and sent him flying through the door and off the stoop as though he was running for the first base.

A little later, while rubbing himself against a shade-tree, he solemnly murmured to the vagrant winds:

"It may be right to go to Sunday-school and tell the truth, but after this I shall travel on the straight lie. Perhaps it is better to be right than President, but I'd rather be wrong than have my back broken in four places by a broomstick."

Beware what you say of others, because you only reveal yourself thereby. A man doesn't think to look behind the door unless he has sometime stood there himself.

No man is more miserable than he that hath no adversity.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

The Songs to Which the Advent has Given Rise—As Popular as Ever.

Probably no festival has ever given birth to so much real poetry and pleasant rhyme as Christmas. Years ago it was the custom in old England to sing carols about the streets late into Christmas eve, and early on Christmas morn. These carols might seem strange to modern ears; for while many of them were charming and graceful others were curious—even grotesque. They were filled with legends concerning the advent, most wonderful events being recounted, and yet with a picturesque simplicity, just as if no one could think them anything unexpected. The so-called "manger-songs" were often quaintly sweet, and they were used on Christmas day in the place of hymns in churches. Quite different were the merry yule songs of the old English Christmas:

Come, bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing;
While my good dame she
Bids you all be free,
And drink to your heart's desiring.

And the thought of feasting is made prominent in numberless old rhymes, as:

Lordling, Christmas loves good drinking—
Wines of Gascoigne, France, Anjou:
English ale, that drives out thinking—
Prince of liquors, old and new.

Be glad, both more and less,
For this hath ordained our steward,
To cheer you all this Christmas—
The boar's head and mustard!

Christmas carols have not grown unpopular, but they have changed, both in composition and rendering, to conform to modern ideas of beauty and refinement. Songs adapted to the comprehension and tastes of children abound; songs suited to religious services appropriate to the day, as well as to the merry household festival. Every child has heard or read with infinite delight:

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring—not even a mouse,

and scores of other rhymes of like beauty. The delightful myth of Santa Claus is one to which juvenile faith tenaciously clings, and the mystery is repeated from eldest to youngest with a freshness never sullied:

Hang up the baby's stocking;
Be sure you don't forget
The dear little dimpled darling!
She never saw Christmas yet;
But I've told her all about it,
And she opened her big blue eyes,
And I'm sure she understands it—
She looked so funny and wise.

Dear! what a funny stocking!
It doesn't take much to hold
Such little pink toes as baby's
Away from the frost and cold;
But then for baby's Christmas
It would never do at all;
Why, Santa wouldn't be looking
For anything half so small.

Everybody, whether old or young, feels a thrill of pleasure at the return of this long-observed festival, and rejoice that the time is at hand when—

Out in the midnight's white and starry splendor
Once more the glad bells ring,
While softer human voices, sweet and tender,
The song of Christmas sing.
Christmas has come!

Christmas Greens.

New York Mail.

The time for decoration in natural greens is at last at hand, and already the rural forager is cutting his own, or any other man's pines, spruce hollys, and what not, for the city market. Poor indeed, not only in money, but in taste, must be the man or woman considered who has not a warm desire to honor the only anniversary on which all civilized people agree with some outward sign of recognition. The better off, if not better disposed, will deck churches, halls and private houses in green. There will be wreaths and festoons on walls and around pictures; shining leaves and red berries will glisten in sunlight, gaslight and electric light; from kerosene, from rancid oils and from tallow dips. The most ignorant will know that some joyful celebration is in progress; the poorest will feel the kind beneficence of charity.

But there are green people as well as green leaves. The man of wealth who does not improve the occasion to make those under his care more happy and prosperous, must be ranked among the Christmas greens. The fine lady whose purse is always full, who fails to bring comfort to some poor person of her own sex misses a rare enjoyment, and takes her place with the Christmas greens. The lover of books who does not enlarge the small library of some poor friend who is hungry for good reading, ranks with the hemlock and the holly. The father who finds not fit presents for his sons and daughters, misses much happiness, and confesses that he, too, is of the greens. The mother high or low, rich or poor, who cannot find between diamonds and sugar plums some pretty gifts for her little ones, is down among her Christmas greens. The brother who has not prepared his purse to get that fur-lined cloak, or that half dozen handkerchiefs for his sister, is one of the Christmas greens. The sister who forgets that Brother John needs a nice cravat, is also of the greens. The lover who has not for a year put by every spare dime to lay at the feet of the adored in the form of some choice gift, is the grass of all greens.

This is not only the season of negative but positive enjoyment. It is not enough to sit at rest and be happy also. There are many who lack the means for procuring those little exchanges that come from and go to the heart. The gift that comes from the hand of human kindness and brotherhood has a value not to be measured by cost. The pair of gloves in which the recipient feels the beating of the heart, of the friend who gave them are a thousand times more welcome than the perfunctory gift of a diamond necklace.

Of course everybody is about to turn over a new leaf. Here and there we may look at the leaf occasionally as the months go on; but the great majority will forget it before Valentine's day, and such may be set down among our Christmas greens.

Santa Claus.

The history of Santa Claus—a curious mixture of truth and fable—goes far back into the ancient time. Centuries ago a child was born in Asia Minor who received the name of Nicholas. His parents were wealthy and of high rank, and, desiring to express their gratitude to God for the birth of their son, they resolved to educate him for the Christian priesthood. The child was sober and thoughtful, and, while yet young both his parents died, and he inherited their great wealth. He considered the riches a sacred trust; he fed the hungry, he clothed the destitute and performed all kinds of good deeds as secretly as possible. As a priest he was greatly beloved; as a bishop he continued his benevolence. After his death the church canonized him, and he became one of the greatest of patron saints, being revered as the helper of the poor, the protector of the weak, and as the especial patron saint for little children, who were taught to believe that their good gifts came from him. Saint Nicholas was the name given him by the monks, and this was familiarly changed to Santa Nic'laus, and finally clipped down to Santa 'Claus, who is still represented as retaining his old habits of secret benevolence, and coming down the chimney at nights laden with Christmas presents for children.

Watching for Santa Claus.

Once there were two little chaps six and eight years old, who made up their minds when Christmas was coming that they would see Santa Claus. They had heard all about him and his "eight tiny reindeer" and his loads of presents, and his coming down the chimney. But they didn't know exactly how true it was. They always hung up their stockings and found them stuffed full of things, from candy to toys and books and mittens and toot-tooters. And of course they wanted to see the old fellow who always brought them just what they wished, and had enough left for all the other boys and girls. So Christmas eve they put their little heads together and said they'd keep awake and watch for Santa Claus.

Of course they didn't let mamma or papa know anything about it. How to keep awake was the question. But finally Dick said he'd poke Harry whenever he went to fall asleep, and Harry was to poke him. They kept up a whispering of stories and questions, too, and wondering what Santa Claus was like, and whether he'd hurt 'em and what they'd get. About ten o'clock they heard a great rattling of papers down stairs, and people stepping around talking very low. This helped to keep them awake too. Pretty soon they heard their mamma coming very carefully toward their room, and they dove down into the pillows and pretended to be awfully sound asleep.

She peeked in, tucked up the clothes, and said, "pretty dears!" as she went out.

"Pretty dears?" said Dick, when she was gone—"there, Harry, she's 'specting Santa Claus, I tell you!"

In a few minutes mamma and papa were in their own room, with the gas turned down low. And after waiting a little while—that seemed to them a long, long time—the two young urchins crawled out of their snug nest, and went tip-toeing down stairs as still as two mice. Dick went ahead, 'cause he was the biggest, and little Harry crept close behind, hanging on to the edge of his brother's night drawers. They had just got cuddled down behind the sofa to watch the fireplace, when they heard a quick step, and before they could even holler Harry was rolled up in a blanket and Dick was dumped into a big sack, and felt himself swung over somebody's shoulders.

"Ouch!" he thought, "Santa has clawed me sure, and I'll bet he's going to carry me to some people who haven't any little boys!"

The bag was so tight he couldn't kick much, nor more than half holler. But he did the best he could, and made whoever it was carrying him hang on pretty tight. Up, up he went, and then round and round; and then he felt the bag lifted up, turned over, and dumped out—where do you suppose?"

"Don't know? In the snow?"

No—right in to his own bed, where he found Harry just crawling out of a quilt. It was done so quick that he couldn't see who ran out of the room, and he was too scared to follow. But from snickers they heard in their father's room, and a big hole they saw in their mother's best pillow case next morning, they could guess pretty close. But they never wanted to watch for Santa Claus again.

Trading in the Arctic Regions.

San Francisco Bulletin.

We went ashore on Diomede island and greatly enjoyed a stroll through the streets and houses of the curious Esquimaux village here. It is built on the bald, rugged side of the island, where the slope is almost cliff-like in steepness and rockiness. The winter houses are wood-lined burrows under-ground, entered by a tunnel, and warm and snug, like the nest of a field-mouse beneath a sod, though terribly thick and rancid as to the air contained in them. The summer houses are square skin boxes above ground, and set on long stilt poles. Neither the one nor the other look the least like houses or huts of any sort, but they are made of skins are the queerest human abodes conceivable. They are simply light, square frames made of drift-poles gathered on the beach, and covered with walrus hide that has been carefully dressed, and stretched tightly on the frame, like the head of a drum. The skin is of a yellow color and quite translucent, so that one feels when in it as if inside a huge blown bladder, the light sifting in through the skin by the top and all around, yellow as a sunset. The entire establishment is window, one pane for the roof, which is also the ceiling, and one for each of the four sides, without cross sash-bars to mar the brave simplicity of it all. Most of the inhabitants, of whom there are perhaps 100, had just returned from a long voyage in their canoes to Cape Prince of Wales, Kotzebue sound, and other points on the American coast, for the purpose of trade, bringing back ivory and furs to sell to the Tschukchis of Siberia, who in turn will carry these articles by a roundabout way nearly 1000 miles to the Russian trading post, and bring back goods to trade back to the Diomede merchants, through whose hands they will pass to the Cape Prince of Wales natives, and from these to several others up the Inland river, down the Colville to Point Barrow, and eastward as far as the mouth of the Mackenzie river. The Diomede merchants are true middlemen, and their village a half way house of commerce between Northeastern Asia and America. The extent of the dealings of these people, usually regarded as savages, is truly surprising. And that they can keep warm and make a living on this bleak, fog-smothered, storm-beaten rock, and have time to beget, and feed, and train children, and give them a good Esquimaux education, teach them to shoot the bow, throw the bird-spears and make them, teach them to make and use those marvelous kyacks, kill seals bears, walrus, hunt the whale, capture the different kinds of fishes, manufacture different sorts of leather, dress skins and make them into clothing, build those strange houses, teach them to carry on trade, make fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together—that they can do all this, and still have time to be sociable, dance, sing, gossip, and discuss ghosts, spirits and all the nerve-shaking marvels of the Shaman world, shows how truly wild, and brave and capable a people these island Esquimaux are.

Salt Lake.

Four barrels of water of the Great Salt Lake will leave after evaporation nearly a barrel of salt. The lake was discovered in the year 1820, and no outlet has yet been ascertained. Four or five large streams empty themselves into it; and the fact of its still retaining the same saline properties seems to point to the conclusion that there exists some secret saline deposit over which the waters flow, and that thus they continue salt—for though the lake may be the residue of an immense sea which once covered the whole of that region, yet by its continuing so salt, with the amount of fresh water poured into it daily, the idea of the existence of some such deposit from which it receives its supply seems to be only too probable. For the past fifteen years until last year, the lake has been gradually rising, but in 1879 it receded two or three feet—a most unusual occurrence—owing to the exceptionally warm weather. There are no fish in the lake, but myriads of small flies cover its surface. The buoyancy of the water is so great that it is not all an easy matter to drown in it. The entire length of Salt Lake is eighty-five miles. Compared with the Dead Sea, the Great Salt Lake is longer by forty-three miles, and broader by thirty-five miles.

The Magnitude of the Rag Trade.

Few persons have any adequate conception of the magnitude and importance of the rag trade in this country. Rags seem to be so cheap and insignificant a commodity that it is surprising to learn that, with the exception of the staple products of the West, they are more largely transported by railroads than any other article of merchandise. At Chicago, the Michigan Central railroad has erected a special building for this kind of freight, and it is estimated that not less than one hundred carloads of rags leave and enter Chicago daily. A good idea of the extent of the trade was recently given a Chicago reporter by a wholesale rag dealer. Said the latter: "There are fifty millions of people in the United States, and it is safe to presume that every one of them discards on an average five pounds of clothing every year. That gives us two hundred and fifty million pounds of rags to start with. Then there are the tailoring establishments, big and little, whose cuttings are not much less in quantity in the aggregate than the cast-off clothes of the nation at large, while their quality as rags is greatly superior. And then there are the carpets, bedding, curtains and other domestic articles of some kind which make up a goodly bulk in the course of the year. The different articles combined make up another two hundred and fifty million pounds of cloth material which has been discarded from use, and which eventually finds its way into the ragman's bale."

There are three ways of getting out of a scrape—write out, back out, but the best way is to keep out.

We are haunted by an Ideal life, and it is because we have within us the beginning and the possibility of it.